

Appendix 4

GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWS ON SCHOOL SAFETY

Principal Interview Protocol (20 main questions X 6 minutes per question = 120 minutes = 2 hours interview)

Personal

1. How long have you served at this school?

General

2. How would you characterize this school's overall climate in terms of a safe and secure place to be? (What about last year? What about few years ago? What accounts for this increase/ decrease--regular practices, enforcement of school rules, security devices, other strategies, combination of all, (in)consistencies of law, leadership, parental/ community participation?).
3. In your opinion what is the general condition of the school? (building, hallways, restrooms, and the cafeteria—are they safe?)

School Violence/ Safety

4. How is violence defined in your school (in writing/ by way of understanding)?
5. What are the more common occurrences with respect to key violence/ safety issues? (Name-calling, bullying/ teasing, hate crimes, intimidation, threat of attack, harassment based on clothes and group-alliance, psychosocial abuse, fights/ assaults, students carrying/ using weapons, availability/ consumption of drugs, availability/ consumption of alcohol, gangs, graffiti/ vandalism, students leaving the school out of fear, etc.). What are you doing about these problems?
6. What are the most common events that trigger off violence?
7. What is the influence of neighborhoods and communities on school violence? (What measures are being taken to resolve some of these issues? Are you collaborating with the local government, police, neighborhood, and community towards this end?)
8. Do you perceive any differences in reasons for and/ or occurrences of school violence (with respect to student grade, class size, gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, your school location, before and after school, time of the day, etc.)? What are you doing about it? (What is the socioeconomic and ethnic makeup of your school?)

Policies, programs, and practices

9. Please discuss if your school has an established mechanism/ policy to record all forms of violence and safety-related issues.
10. Do all school personnel know what types of actions need to be reported (updated information)? (Who usually reports and to whom? What is the procedure? Does it work?)
11. Do all students know what types of actions need to be reported (updated information)? Can students easily access and interact with authority in some form to

- report a violation/ crime confidentially? Are they aware of this policy and other safety-related policies? Are they working? (student code of silence).
12. What is your school's approach to violence prevention by type of incident? Is each one of them being followed through and implemented? What more needs to be done?
 13. Do you have a safe school team/ committee? Who is on this team (teacher, security, fire, police, nurse, counselor, etc.)?
 14. How are the following students treated in case of violations: special education including section 504, expelled/ suspended, etc.?
 15. How well is the school equipped to respond to various crises? (Is there an emergency plan and are students and school personnel aware of/ trained for it? How is it implemented?) (What happens if there is an intruder, or if there is a bomb threat? Can students make outside contact in times of crises? Can they leave the school safely if there is a need?)
 16. Are all students and school personnel provided with violence related training? (symptoms recognition, self protection, social and cultural diversity, anger management, conflict resolution, etc.)
 17. Do you evaluate and revise all your policies, programs, and practices periodically?

Case example

18. Could you elaborate on a recent violence/ school safety related incident to illustrate what happened and how the situation was dealt with (from start to finish)?

Support for efforts

19. Do you believe that your school district/ board has been supportive of your efforts to improve safety in your school? How?
20. Do you experience pressure regarding (altering) information on school violence/ safety (from parents, mayors, superintendents, the media, etc.)? If yes, what in your opinion can be done to improve this situation?
21. What are the main obstacles to making the school a safer place? What would it take to overcome these obstacles? (What do you think should be done now--this school year, this summer, next school year--to make the school a safer place? What will it take to accomplish this goal?)

Additional information

22. Are you doing your own school safety survey (or information gathering)? If yes, can I have access to it?
23. Could I have a copy of your school's guidelines?

Head of Security Interview Protocol (9 main questions X 6 minutes per question
= 54 = Maximum 1 hour interview)

Personal

1. How long have you been associated with/ held this position with this school?

General

2. Do you believe the school provides a safe environment for learning ? How has this changed in the last few years?

School violence/ Safety

3. What are some of the most prevalent criminal offenses in the school as witnessed by you? (How prevalent are weapons and gangs?) What security measures have been undertaken to curb these activities? What more needs to be done?
4. What types of non-criminal disorder are most prevalent in the school in your experience? (How prevalent are alcohol and drugs?) What security measures have been undertaken to curb these activities? What more needs to be done?
5. Are certain types of incidents more likely to occur in certain locations (within or outside school) or at certain times (before school, after school, recess, etc.)?
6. What kinds of incidents do not get recorded? Why?

Policies, programs, and practices

7. In your opinion, which practices are the most and least effective with regard to violence and safety in this school? What more needs to be done?
8. How is the security staff trained to deal with violence and other safety related issues? (Are you satisfied with the procedure and outcome?)

Case example

9. Could you elaborate on a recent violence/ school safety related incident to illustrate what happened and how the situation was dealt with (from start to finish)?

Support for efforts

10. Please elaborate upon the kind of support you receive from the administration to enforce school rules.

SRO Interview Protocol (8 main questions X 7 minutes per question = 56 = Maximum 1 hour interview)

Personal

1. How long have you been associated with this school?

General

2. Do you believe the school provides a safe environment for learning? How has this changed in the last few years?

School violence/ Safety

3. As you think of the city as a whole, would you describe the community surrounding the school as a high or low crime area? What crimes? (businesses, sex offenders, etc.). (Has the crime increased, decreased, or remained the same? Why?)
4. Are there areas in the community that are hot spots for crime? Are any of these areas located near the school? (How close are they to routes students use for traveling to and from school? What changes in crime have taken place in the past few years?)
5. Has the number of school-age youths involved in crimes increased, decreased, or remained the same over the past few years? (Why? What types of crimes are most common?)

Policies, programs, and practices

6. What should the school be doing to prevent/ reduce school violence? (practices).
7. Are any officers involved in non-security related duties/ activities? (What activities, duration, etc.?)
8. Please elaborate on how comfortable you are with your training to deal with school violence and safety related issues.

Case example

9. Could you elaborate on a recent violence/ school safety related incident to illustrate what happened and how the situation was dealt with (from start to finish)?

Teacher Interview Protocol (10 main questions X 5 minutes per question = 50 = 1 hour interview).

Personal

1. How long have you served at this school?

General

2. Do you feel that this school/ classroom is a safe environment for learning? How safe do you feel personally? How safe do you believe the students feel (on the way to/ from school, at the school/ classroom)?
3. Are the school facilities (restrooms, cafeteria, hallways, classrooms) safe? Are there locations within the school that are considered particularly unsafe by the students and staff?

School violence/ Safety

4. How much are students at risk for violence (experiencing and witnessing) when they enter school (before, after, during breaks)? Has this changed in recent years?
5. What is the extent of disorder and violence in the classroom? Has this changed over the past few years? How?
6. What are the more common occurrences with respect to key violence/ safety issues as observed by you? (name-calling, bullying/ teasing, hate crimes, intimidation, threat of attack, harassment based on clothes and group-alliance, psychosocial abuse, fights/ assaults, weapons, drugs, alcohol, gangs, graffiti/ vandalism, etc.)
7. What factors contribute the most to violence in this school in your opinion? (What is the influence of the neighborhood on school violence?)
8. How likely do you think are students to come forward with their problems and fears concerning violence? Do they come to you? What do you do?

Policies, programs, and practices

9. What are some of the successful practices in your school to control school violence? (teacher training, LRE, peer mediation, interaction between students and adults, etc.) What more needs to be done?
10. How are all the students and school personnel made aware of the procedures for reporting crime? (Do all criminal violations get reported? If no, why?)

Case example

11. Could you elaborate on a recent violence/ school safety related incident in the classroom/ school to illustrate what happened and how the situation was dealt with (from start to finish)?

Playground Aide Interview Protocol (7 main questions X 8 minutes per question
= 56 = Maximum 1 hour interview)

Personal

1. How long have you served at this school?

General

2. Do you feel that this school is a safe environment for learning? How safe do you feel personally? How safe do the students feel?

School violence/ Safety

3. What is the extent of disorder and violence in this school/ playground as observed by you? Has this changed over the past few years? How?
4. What are the more common occurrences with respect to key violence/ safety issues in your opinion? (name-calling, bullying/ teasing, hate crimes, intimidation, threat of attack, harassment based on clothes and group-alliance, psychosocial abuse, fights/ assaults, weapons, drugs, alcohol, gangs, graffiti/ vandalism, etc.)
5. What factors contribute the most to violence as observed by you? Do you notice any difference in student behavior and attitude as they enter the playgrounds and as they leave back for their classrooms?
6. Are all the students and school personnel aware of the procedures for reporting crime?

Policies, programs, and practices

7. In your opinion what are some of the most and least successful practices in this school for controlling school violence? What more needs to be done? (Do you think the discipline policies in your school are fair and equitable?)
8. How likely do you think are students to come forward with problems about school violence and safety issues? Do they come to you? What do you do?

Counselor Interview Protocol (8 main questions X 7 minutes per question = 56 = Maximum 1 hour interview)

Personal

1. How long have you served at this school?

General

2. Do you feel that this school is a safe environment for learning? How safe do you feel personally? How safe do the students feel?

School violence/ Safety

3. What is the extent of disorder and violence in this school environment? Has this changed over the past few years? How?
4. What are the more common occurrences with respect to key violence/ safety issues as observed by you? (name-calling, bullying/ teasing, hate crimes, intimidation, threat of attack, harassment based on clothes and group-alliance, psychosocial abuse, fights/ assaults, weapons, drugs, alcohol, gangs, graffiti/ vandalism, etc.)
5. How likely do you think are students to come forward with problems? Do they come to you? What do you do?
6. Please elaborate how frequently you have had to use post-crises intervention. (Was this used on staff or students? What types of students—victims, others?)
7. What is the impact of school violence on the students and their overall wellbeing? (injuries—what kind; attendance; performance, etc.)
8. In your experience how do socioeconomic and family circumstances influence violent or disruptive behavior in students? (abuse within family, lack of support from parents or family, etc.)

Policies, programs, and practices

9. In your opinion what are some of the most and least successful practices in controlling school violence (your training, fair and equitable discipline policies for students)? What more needs to be done?

Bus Driver Interview Protocol (8 main questions X 7 minutes per question = 56 = Maximum 1 hour interview)

Personal

1. How long have you been driving the bus for this specific school?

General

2. Do you feel that this school is a safe environment for learning? How safe do you feel personally? How safe do the students feel (on the way to/ from school)?

School violence/ Safety

3. What is the extent of disorder and violence in this school/ bus as observed by you? Has this changed over the past few years? How?
4. What are the more common occurrences with respect to key violence/ safety issues as observed by you? (name-calling, bullying/ teasing, hate crimes, intimidation, threat of attack, harassment based on clothes and group-alliance, psychosocial abuse, fights/ assaults, weapons, drugs, alcohol, gangs, graffiti/ vandalism, etc.)
5. What factors contribute the most to student violence in the school/ bus in your opinion? (Do you notice any difference in student behavior and attitude as they enter the bus and as they get off for school/ home?)

Policies, programs, and practices

6. In your opinion what are some of the most and least successful practices in controlling violence in this school? What more needs to be done (in the school/ bus)?
7. How likely do you think are students to come forward with problems? Do they come to you? What do you do?
8. Have you been trained to handle school violence and safety issues on the bus? If not, what do you think needs to be done?

Support for efforts

9. Please elaborate upon the kind of support you receive from the administration to report school rules. (Are you taken seriously?)